(d) As and when an armed conflict and/or war breaks out between India and another country, emergency is declared under the Constitution and the Defence of India Act is enacted under which "enemy" is defined. It also provides for vesting of properties of enemy nationals in the Custodian of Enemy Property for India, Bombay.

The Defence of India Act lapses 6 months after the expiry of the emergency. The Enemy Property Act of 1968, as amended from time to time, provides for the continuation of vesting of these enemy properties in the Custodian of Enemy Property for India even after the expiry of the Defence of India Act and Rules framed thereunder.

(e) the Custodian of Enemy Property for India, Bombay, is a statutory body set up under the Enemy Property Act, 1968, as amended from time to time, and functions under the overall supervision of the Government of India.

Sick Tea Gardens in Southern Assam

2760. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that a large number of sick and weak tea gardens in Southern Assam, some of which have already been abandoned and the rest are also not in a position to survive;

(b) if so, the specific measures taken by the Tea Board to revitalise these gardens;

(c) whether Government have contemplated any steps to save lives of tea labourers of these gardens; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (d) A survey by the Tea Board, sometime back revealed that there were 47 weak tea gardens and 5 closed tea gardens in Assam. The incidence of sickness/ weakness of these gardens has decreased since then owing to improved economic conditions and continued stability in the State. The difficulties faced by sick and weak tea gardens are quite complex arising out of the diverse causes such as managerial/financial problems protracted litigation etc. These have been discussed with the commercial banks under the aegis of Tea Board to facilitate funding and related measures.

Tea Board has several schemes for welfare of plantation workers in tea estates. These welfare schemes inter-alia include providing grant to the wards of the tea gardens workers for pursuing studies above the primary level and also providing financial assistance to educational institutions, hospitals etc. for construction of health centres, extension of educational and vocational training and specialised treatment facilities for the benefit of the tea garden workers and their families.

Working of KVIC in Andhra Pradesh

2761. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY of be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a review of the activities of the KVIC in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that an outside agency is being invited to examine the working of KVIC; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Every year, while considering the budget proposals of the implementing agencies viz State KVI Boards, Institutions, the progress achieved is reviewed. Only then the programme for

next financial year is agreed. This system is applicable all over country.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Contracts with Private Parties

2762. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of contracts with private parties both domestic and foreign, the Ministry of Steel or its subsidiary agencies have entered into since 1991-92 for development or expansion of iron ore mines and coal washeries;

(b) whether Government will be agreeable to get up a committee consisting of eminent financial experts, accountants and economists to review the soundness of these contracts; and

(c) whether representations have been received about lack of transparency in such contractual arrangements?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL & MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDER PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (c) During the period since 1991-92, two contracts have been entered into as per details below:—

(i) Bhilai Steel Plant of the Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) has entered into one contract with an Indian private party as per details given below:

Description of job	Award No. & Date	Value (Rs. in crores)	Name of the Party
Primary crushing and conveying facilities for Dalli Mines.	No. Dy. CE(TK) (281/95/880 dt. 18.5.95	38.88	M/s Bekay Engg. Crop., Bhilai.

(ii) Durgapur Steel Plant of SAIL placed an order on M/sOTTO India Ltd. for 18.90 crores in March, 1994 for Revamping of Captive Coal Washery at Durgapur under indigenous package of Modernisation Programme of DSP.

No representations have been received about lack of transparency in concluding the above contracts. Well laid down procedures subjectto scrutiny by internal and external (statutory/Govt.) agencies, already exist for award of contracts by PSUs/Govt. managed companies. It may, not therefore, be necessary to set up a committee of experts.

While no contracts of the above nature have been awarded by any other agency under the Ministry of Steel, National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) has entered into a joint ventue agreement with M/s NIPPON DENRO ISPAT LTD. on 10.7.95 for the development of BAILADILA IRON ORE DEPOSIT II-B, and the Orissa Mineral Development Corporation Ltd. of the Bird Group of Companies, under the administrative control of Ministry of Steel has entered into a MOU with M/s Usha (India), formerly M/s Usha Rectifier Corporation, for setting up a joint venture company for establishing a two million tonne crushing and screening plant for producing sized iron ore for use in Sponge Iron plants. Inter-alia this joint venture company will obtain 50% of its iron ore from OMDC Mines.

Some representations have been received against the development of